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# DAILY REPORT

## ANNEX

# MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA

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FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE

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SYRIAN MINISTER DISCUSSES OCTOBER WAR--PART ONE

Damascus MENA in Arabic to MENA Cairo 0836 GMT 5 Oct 75 NO--FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

[Text] Damascus, 5 October--Maj Gen Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief of the army, the armed forces and Syrian defense minister, has stated that the way the October war plan was implemented on the Egyptian front has proved that the Egyptian political command contrived a different plan than that we agreed upon and pledged to implement.

He said: We aimed at liberating the occupied Arab territories while the Egyptian political command aimed at crossing the canal remaining on its banks without advancing with a view to revive the issue at world level, thus leading to our present state. He added: Planning the battle for liberating the Golan was 100 percent Syrian Arab, drawn up by the Syrian Arab army under the direct supervision of President Hafiz al-Asad. The strategic planning for coordination between the Syrian and Egyptian fronts and the political, information, deception and other plans which accompanied this were the only joint Syrian-Egyptian planning.

This was contained in an interview Major General Talas has given to Syrian newspapers AL-BA'TH and ATH-THAWRAH, which the papers published today. In their preamble, the two papers say that while our Arab people are marking the second anniversary of the October war of liberation--the war which restored the confidence to the masses of our nation in their capabilities and armed strength--leaders of Arab Egypt are attempting to distort the facts about this glorious war. They are even attempting to confuse the Arab citizen and to discredit our country's steadfastness, sacrifices, martyrs and its historical Arab struggle.

The two papers say that in view of all this it is necessary to give the facts to our Arab masses who are now facing a critical time as a result of the Egyptian-Israeli agreement. In his interview which dealt with the October war, Major General Talas spoke about Syria's role in planning and preparing for this war. Answering a question in this respect, he said: Posing this question raises at once astonishment and surprise because Syria was a main partner in the October war of liberation. However, the dense fog and the instigation and distortion attempts which we are facing day and night from well-known sources entitle the masses of our people to put them in the true picture and to protect them against the overt and covert flow of incitements, deception and lies to mislead them.

He added: We can precisely say that plans and preparations for the October war began in Syria following the Israeli aggression on the Arab nation on 5 June 1967.

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Since that date, proceeding from our party and our masses rejection of the reality of the setback, President Hafiz al-Asad, who was at the time a member of the party regional command and defense minister, assumed with the staff in his command in the army and the armed forces, a scientific and careful analysis study of the political, military and economic aspects of the situation. He reached the natural conclusion that the reality of the setback which affected the Arab nation can only be overcome by following two ways:

1. To consolidate the military energies of all the Arab states, particularly the frontline states and to raise their combat standard.
2. To consolidate Arab solidarity to provide a suitable climate for massing the resources for the sake of the primary issue, namely liberation. This is because the steadfastness against the Zionist-imperialist invasion of the Arab homeland and the liberation of the occupied territories can only be achieved by the united efforts of the Arab nation, more precisely by achieving the pan-Arabism of the battle.

In the domestic field, Major General Talas said that President al-Asad was aware that the high objective aspired by the people can only be achieved by the following two courses:

1. To rally all groups of the people in the Syrian Arab region around the liberation objective.
2. To rebuild the armed forces, consolidate their arms and training and raise their morale and combat capabilities.

These convictions by President Hafiz al-Asad have guided his steps toward the corrective movement.

He said that President Hafiz al-Asad ordered the formation of a permanent committee under his direct supervision to define the practical steps for rebuilding the armed forces, training and armament. The committee began its work by reviewing the structure of the army and defining its size in the light of the army's task, namely liberation. In view of Egypt's position in the military operations arena and the role its armed forces could play in the expected war of liberation, steps were taken to establish close military relations with the Arab Republic of Egypt and the unified military command between the Egyptian and Syrian armies was consolidated under the command of the commander in chief of the Egyptian Armed Forces.

Talas added: All this took place by the initiative of Syria and its leader President Hafiz al-Asad. By 1972 our armed forces were prepared to wage the war of liberation. Plans were drawn up here in Syria. We began the scientific training of our forces under the slogan of training plans. Major General Talas said that in the spring of 1973 a meeting was held between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Anwar as-Sadat in Burj al-'Arab in Alexandria. They decided that the battle should begin that year and the forces should be ready to assume any combat tasks effective the middle of May provided that a specific date and other details shall be determined in following political and military meetings.

He said: Once again we reviewed the operational plans, previously drawn up, in the light of experience and know-how. The Egyptian forces also drew up their operational plans for the Egyptian front.

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The coordination of the two plans took place at joint meetings of the Egyptian and Syrian commands under the chairmanship of Commander in Chief Field Marshal Ahmad Isma'il, may God have mercy on him. The political, information and deception plans were drawn up in complete coordination between the two fronts. Major General Talas said that the military plans were based on the following mainlines:

1. To achieve the element of surprise against the Zionist enemy.
2. To begin the offensive simultaneously on the Syrian and the Egyptian fronts to curb the enemy's air and land effort and disperse his forces.
3. To penetrate deep into enemy defenses in Sinai and the Golan after crossing the Suez Canal and assaulting the engineering barriers and fortifications in the Golan, and to maintain a high frequency of advance on both fronts to force the enemy to split his forces throughout the battle and to prevent him from dealing separately with each of the two fronts.

When we were working out the plan, coordinating it and agreeing on it, we took the following considerations into account:

1. In view of the difficulty and complexity of crossing the canal as an engineering barrier facing the attacking forces on the Egyptian front, the Syrian forces would have to break through the engineering barriers confronting them with thrust and persistence, whatever the sacrifices, to force the enemy into concentrating its main effort, particularly his air force, in defending this front.
2. Since the Golan front is near populated areas in Palestine, the enemy would be compelled to continually bring in his reserves in an attempt to halt the thrust of the Syrian forces, which would create the ideal conditions for the Egyptian Army to cross the canal with the least possible losses. This is what actually happened.
3. Once the Egyptian Army crossed the canal and occupied the line of fortifications on the eastern bank of the canal, called the Bar-Lev line, the Egyptian Army would push its armored divisions to further the attack and move with thrust and persistence to occupy the passes in order to force the Israeli army into redeploying his forces. Thus, pressure would ease on the Syrian front which would by then have waged ferocious battles, sustained most of the pressure on the Israeli army and inflicted upon it grave losses in equipment and men. The Syrian forces would then move to recover the occupied Syrian territories and consolidate their foothold on the eastern bank of the Jordan River. Thus, it can be briefly said that the planning for the Golan liberation battle was a Syrian Arab plan which was totally worked out by the Syrian Army command under President Hafiz al-Asad's direct supervision and followup. The strategic plans for coordination between the two fronts and the concomitant political, information and camouflage plans were joint Syrian-Egyptian plans.

Major General Talas then referred to two exciting events that occurred prior to the plan to issue orders to the forces to start the battle. The first was when the enemy noticed the enormity of the concentrations on the Syrian front despite all the measures of camouflage and deception taken to conceal the concentrations because the enemy's observation posts completely commanded the cease-fire line.

(continues on back pages of Annex)

He said that the second incident, which made us live in tension and anxiety for days--and at the time we were going through the countdown stage--was one day when a high-ranking Egyptian official surprised us by making a statement saying that the hour of liberation had drawn near. In those moments, this statement was too much to believe because it was contrary to the agreed strategic camouflage plan and would warn the enemy if it was taken in conjunction with the other evidence he had, and could have led Israel into launching the attack before us. When Field Marshal Ahmad Isma'il, may God have mercy on him, came to Syria a few days before the date of the attack, we expressed our surprise and anger over the statement. He shared our view and expressed his surprise as well.

Major General Talas then discussed the standard of the implementation of the October war military plans. He said that the standard of implementation on the Syrian front was consistent with the plan and extremely faithful. At the set hour, our forces moved and implemented the plan despite all the unfavorable circumstances, dictated by the need to bring about the success of the Egyptian army's crossing of the canal with the least losses. Our soldiers and officers paid the price of this in blood. President Anwar as-Sadat recognized this when he told President Hafiz al-Asad: Egypt is nationally indebted to Syria. Perhaps other circumstances made it necessary to launch the attack at 1500, because from 1400 to 1500 the artillery and the air force were preparing the way for the attack, instead of at the first hour of daylight--a matter which made our forces break through the enemy's defenses and fortifications in the worst conditions as the sun was about to set in the west and made it very difficult for our forces to see, also making the storming of the enemy's fortified support points take place in [words indistinct] when it was dark and the concomitant complications.

Talas said: We made this sacrifice so that the general plan would succeed and out of consideration for the situation on the Egyptian front which was (useful) through the crossing of the canal at night [words indistinct], the pure souls of our martyrs who died content in the knowledge that they were giving their lives so that their comrades on the canal front would succeed in crossing that gigantic barrier. He added: As to execution of the plan, I refer you to what Moshe Dayan said in his press conference on the fourth day of the battle when our tanks were storming across the Golan and our forces overlooking the Hulah plain. Moshe Dayan said: "We must stop this pestilence which is storming the Golan and threatening the heart of Israel. In Sinai we are sure to repel them, for the distances that separate us there will enable us to do so at any time."

What happened on the Egyptian front was that when the fraternal Egyptian army crossed the canal and stormed the Bar-Lev Line it spent many days repelling the tactical counter-attacks [word indistinct] the canal, in implementation of the orders of its political command, which enabled the Israeli command to expose the intentions of the Egyptian command and transfer its reserves to the northern front. The Egyptian command continued in this manner for a whole week, until 14 October 1973, without considering marshaling in its other forces and following up the attack, despite our continued insistence that the plan should be followed.

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When on 14 October Egyptian command thought of [words indistinct] Israel had received, via the American airbridge, a supply of U.S. antitank missiles, which enabled it to inflict heavy tank losses on the Egyptian armored divisions and thwart their use in the battle, although had they been thrown in immediately after the crossing of the canal the Egyptian Army would have been able to liberate the [Jiddi and Mitla] passes and continue their advance toward the total liberation of the Sinai Peninsula.

He added: The way the plan was implemented on the Egyptian front proved that the Egyptian political command contrived a different plan than what we had agreed upon and pledged to implement. We aimed at liberating the occupied Arab territories while the Egyptian political command was to cross the canal and remain on its bank without advancing in order to revive the issue at world level, thus leading to the our present stage.

Major General Talas spoke about the cease-fire decision. He said that it had the effect of lightning on the Syrian Army as every soldier in the Syrian Armed Forces was confident that the salient of the enemy forces in the northern sector of the front would become a graveyard for these forces in a few days. Everybody could see the preparations which we made to liquidate this salient.

Answering a question on President as-Sadat's speech in which he attacked and ridiculed the counteroffensive which the Syrian Arab region was planning, Major General Talas said: It is sad that President as-Sadat ridiculed the counteroffensive which the Syrian Arab region was planning. I do not wish to comment on this. As for the said counteroffensive, any officer in any army in the world who has reasonable military training would be astonished that President as-Sadat has scoffed at and ridiculed the possibility of executing such offensive.

Since 15 October, following fierce battles and counteroffensives between our forces and the enemy on the Syrian front, the situation was as follows: On the southern front, following fierce battles in which the enemy forces sustained grave losses, our forces established their positions along the cease-fire line after enemy attacks failed to cause any wedge. In the central sector, all enemy attempts to penetrate our lines failed. In the northern sector, where the division commander and a brigade commander were martyred in battles for honor and manhood, the enemy succeeded in penetrating along a narrow strip. After violent battles and series of counterattacks, it was obvious to the enemy that he was involved in a salient not more than 10 km deep. Four enemy brigades were encircled by one infantry and two armored divisions. This was in addition to a reconnaissance group and two Jordanian armored brigades which arrived on 21 October 1973. Orders were given to be prepared for counteroffensive to cut off, capture or destroy the enemy force. As these preparations were about to be completed, a cable was received from President as-Sadat accepting the cease-fire. It was a painful tragedy to all the Arabs who had hoped for a protracted battle against the Zionist enemy.

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Answering a question about repeated statements by President as-Sadat and his information media that he had only revealed one quarter of facts about the October war, Major General Talas said: We wish to hear the other three-quarters because under President al-Asad's guidance we did nothing either secretly or publicly to be ashamed of.

Concluding his interview, Major General Talas lauded the results of the October war at the level of the enemy society, the Arab and the international levels.

#### PAPER REPORTS NEW EGYPTIAN CABINET TO BE FORMED

Damascus MENA in Arabic to MENA Cairo 1050 GMT 3 Oct 75 NC--FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

[Text] Kuwait, 3 October--The Kuwaiti newspaper AR-RA'Y AL-'AMM today quotes reliable sources as saying that a new Egyptian Government will be formed after the Al-Fitr holidays, which will be more liberal with the policy Egypt has adopted after signing the Sinai agreement with Israel. AR-RA'Y AL-'AMM says that well-informed sources said that Isma'il Fahmi, deputy prime minister for foreign affairs, will form the new government replacing Mamduh Salim, the present prime minister. The paper says that several matters relating to the economic and investment sectors will be announced in Cairo after the Al-Fitr holidays.

#### AL-BA'TH: ISRAEL, U.S. SEEK PEACE AT ARAB EXPENSE

Damascus MENA in Arabic to MENA Cairo 0817 GMT 3 Oct 75 NC--FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

[Excerpt] Damascus, 3 October--The Syrian newspaper AL-BA'TH today stresses that Israel and the United States are not seeking a real peace in the area but an American-Israeli peace which would only be at the expense of the Arab cause and struggle. The paper asks that attempts to emerge from the Middle East crisis are not only proceeding along a blocked road but also along a way full of schemes, delusions and deceptive solutions. The paper notes that Syria's stand, which Foreign Minister 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam proclaimed at the United Nations, has produced different reactions. However, the public reaction was regrettably confined to the Egyptian delegation and the Israeli foreign minister who from among the 141 member states were the only delegates to voice their objection. The paper adds: On all previous occasions it was Israel which sought to answer Arab officials. What has happened so that the world has changed to this extent?

#### AR-RIFA'I VISIT TO DAMASCUS SEEN AS MEDIATION

Damascus MENA in Arabic to MENA Cairo 1008 GMT 2 Oct 75 NC--FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

[Text] Amman, 2 October--Diplomatic quarters in Amman say that the visit of Jordanian Prime Minister Zayd ar-Rifa'i to Syria yesterday aimed at the possible mediation of Jordan to soften the dispute between Syria and Egypt at the request of Saudi Arabia.

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These quarters add that the efforts being made now in the four Arab capitals of Damascus, Amman, Cairo and At-Ta'if are expected to result in meetings between senior officials of these capitals to face the requirements of the coming state in a manner which would achieve the aims of Arab solidarity.

The Jordanian paper AD-DUSTUR reports that the visits of Zayd ar-Rifa'i to Riyadh and Damascus indicate that there is an Arab move which aims at strengthening the ranks of and solidarity among those who are responsible for the same fateful issue.

The paper adds: This initiative has come right on time particularly if it meets an effective response from all the Arab parties which would cooperate to dispel the passing clouds clouding the atmosphere between Cairo and Damascus.

It further says: The foreseen and unforeseen possibilities in the Arab arena behoove the Arabs to overcome all the marginal differences and concentrate their capacities on confronting the main contradiction represented in the Zionist aggression on the Arab lands.

#### KUWAITI SUPPORT TO EGYPT TERMED FINANCIAL AID

Damascus MENA in Arabic to MENA Cairo 1100 GMT 3 Oct 75 NC--FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

[Text] Kuwait, 3 October--Deputy Habib Jawhar Hayat, member of the Kuwaiti National Assembly's financial and economic committee has stated that from the legal point of view, the economic support which Kuwait has undertaken to extend to the Arab Republic of Egypt was conditional on the stoppage of work in the Suez Canal and that it was considered as compensation to Egypt for the loss of the canal's revenues because of the war.

In a statement to the paper AL-QABAS, the deputy added that following the resumption of navigation in the canal, the financial committee has decided to amend the law on material support to Egypt and turn it into a financial aid which will be included in the state's general budget under the aid clause.

Hayat also said that members of the assembly's financial committee agreed at their last meeting that it was necessary to continue to give financial support to Egypt because of the difficult financial conditions of the fraternal country.